

## Contemporary French cuisine impossibly elevated at Addison San Diego (Photos)



Addison (The Grand Del Mar)



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As a seasoned food, wine, and [travel](#) writer (pardon the pun) with scores of restaurant stories to my credit, suffice it to say I've experienced my fair share of elegant, award-winning eateries. However, none compare to the experience I had at [Addison](#)—the signature restaurant of The Grand [Del Mar](#) in [San Diego](#), California.

At this inimitable restaurant, Director and Executive Chef William Bradley's seasonal locavore-driven approach, artisanal food sensibility, culinary prowess and apparent meticulous nature converge, elevating contemporary French cuisine to an impossibly high standard. This, coupled with impeccable, masterfully orchestrated front-of-the-house service, has rightfully entrenched [Addison](#) as one of the most revered fine [dining](#) establishments in Southern California if not the United States at large.

The restaurant is named after Addison Mizner, an architectural legend who defined the aesthetic of the Palm Beach and Boca Raton, Florida resort communities with his iconic style rife with Italian, Spanish, and Mediterranean inspirations. Visiting Addison was a

gratifying and nostalgic full circle for me, as I began my career working at the Mizner Park compound in Boca Raton. From the impressive marble bar and flooring, massive limestone fireplace, intricate iron and glass doorways trimmed with 22-karat gold accents, 20-foot high pyramid ceilings and arched windows that frame stunning views of the golf course and mountains beyond, just to name a few interior design notables, guests are well aware of their uber-sophisticated surroundings, duly setting their epicurean expectations high in kind.

And, Chef Bradley does not merely deliver on these expectations—he blazes well beyond with a holistic fine dining experience that will not be forgotten. Certainly, being distinct and memorable is what Chef Bradley well intends. When asked what sets Addison apart from other high end eateries in the area, he noted, “Our Tasting Menu choices allow guests to select from three different fine dining experiences.” Addison guests can, in fact, opt for the Four-Course Experience (\$98 per person)—a menu that changes seasonally or based on last-minute availability of the best, freshest products. Also available is a Seven-Course Carte Blanche Menu (\$175 per person) designed for those sophisticated, adventurous diners who prefer the Chef to create a luxurious meal that is a surprise to them. Addison also offers Le Menu Gourmand (\$235 per person) for those who desire a truly unforgettable and very extravagant 10-course dinner.

The evening of my visit, I and my guest reveled in the Four-Course Experience where each artfully prepared and plated dish implausibly outdid that prior. Highlights from the Summer Menu included these first course selections: Kumamoto Oysters with preserved lemon, horseradish, and watercress; Kona Kampachi with uni, nori, and cucumber; and Langoustines “Croustillantes” with parmesan, baby romaine, and avocado mousseline. Stunning second course selections were the Porc Pressé with black kale, scallions, and dashi and Dover Sole “Amandine” with choufarci, crevettes, and sherry. Third course options included the Kobe Beef Short Rib with escargot gratin and potato croustillant and Salmon Au Beurre Salé with beets, apples, fennel, and sauce “trois gros.” And, a fourth course favorite was the Strawberries “Feuilles de Brick” with orange sherbet and candied orange.

Another distinct feature, according to Chef Bradley, is Addison’s eclectic, diverse extensive Wine Spectator Grand Award-winning wine list. He explained, “Our team of highly credentialed sommeliers is there to interact with guests according to the level of assistance and depth of knowledge that each guest requests or is comfortable with. In

addition, our custom-produced, proprietary wines and champagnes are available only at Addison and The Grand Del Mar, making it possible for guests to be able to savor certain wines that are not available to them anywhere else.”

Also setting Addison well apart from the pack, Chef Bradley has established a rigorous training program for the entire front-of-the-house and in-the-kitchen staff, which he notes allows the restaurant to “execute a high level of service and a quality” and deliver a “memorable dining experience night after night.” When asked about his personal favorite aspect of the restaurant, he replied, “I love the culinary ‘ballet’ that takes place in our dining room and in my kitchen on a nightly basis. When everyone is doing his or her job brilliantly and our guests are obviously having a wonderful experience, I relish the synergy of the place.” And, synergistic it is, with the service team accurately described as moving “swiftly, yet discreetly, to ensure your experience is utterly seamless” and with the entire evening, course by course, “perfectly paced, like the tempo of any great symphony.”

Also appealing to the social set, the restaurant holds various fun and educational culinary events that involve hands-on experiences for guests, including recent events like “The Beauty of Baking” and “Wine Tasting Party Secrets” spearheaded by Addison’s resident Wine Director, Elizabeth Huettinger.

Relative to the cuisine at Addison, itself, where “mastering simplicity with a keen focus on taste and technique” is the perennial precept, Chef Bradley’s artisanal methods and refined styling accentuate a California farm-to-table mandate bolstered by seasonal ingredients sourced close to the restaurant. Case in point, fully half of the produce served at Addison is procured from Crow’s Pass Farms in the neighboring city of Temecula. Chef Bradley, a native San Diegan, has honed his distinct style and masterful skill set in an array of notable California kitchens where he’s cultivated a life-long love for the history of food, taste, and technique, including a successful stint at Azzura Point at Loews Coronado Bay Resort.

Today, under Chef Bradley’s close and calculated command, Addison has itself garnered impressive awards and accolades. Chef Bradley proudly asserts, “It’s San Diego’s first and only restaurant to win the coveted Five-Star Award from Forbes Travel Guide, 2009-2013.” Addison has also received Forbes Five-Star ratings and three stars from the Los Angeles Times—the highest review of a restaurant outside Los Angeles

county. Addison was also named one of “America’s Best New Restaurants for 2007” by Esquire magazine and Gayot’s “Top 10 U.S. Hotel Restaurants.” Most impressively, Chef Bradley, himself, has been designated a Relais & Châteaux Grand Chef—one of only 162 chefs on five continents to hold this prestigious title, and the only member in San Diego county. The Couteaux Review, an epicurean organization that promotes sustainable agriculture, also selected Bradley as a recipient of the 2011 Couteaux Review Sustainability Award. Prior to Addison, serving as Executive Chef at Vu restaurant in Scottsdale, Arizona, Chef Bradley was a candidate for the coveted James Beard “Rising Star Chef” award for three consecutive years and named a “Rising Star Chef for 2006” by the Arizona Republic.

However, Chef Bradley is not one to rest on his laurels. He continues to be fueled by definitive goals to further enhance Addison’s culinary and service experience for patrons. “My long term goal is always to better what we are already doing so well by challenging ourselves to continue to create memorable menus highlighted by new and exciting ingredients, and by perfecting techniques of preparation and presentation,” he said. With a visceral understanding that an exceptional dining experience extends well beyond menu conception and execution, Chef Bradley emphasizes, “In addition, we are dedicated to providing the highest level of training, support, respect and mentorship for all of our team. We are also committed to offering resort guests and interested members of the community fun and interesting educational food and beverage experiences, including tastings, classes, and events.”

For those hungry for a restaurant exuding a graceful European ambiance, cultivated French cuisine from a true master, a second-to-none wine program and flawless service, Addison awaits.